



Our Lady's School



Transition Year Programme

work experience
completed projects
challenge
sign language
sewing
business
website
musical
new activities
first aid
coaching
new skills
christmas fair
swimming
baking
carlingford
confidence



Part 1: Introduction to Transition Year at Our Lady's School

The Department of Education Transition Year Programme Guidelines (1995) assert the mission of TY to be to *'promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of pupils and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participative, and responsible members of society.'*

This governing aim resonates closely with the ethos of Our Lady's School and Transition Year has formed an integral part of the Our Lady's School curriculum since 1976. Since then our programme has evolved and developed to meet the changing needs of our students. Our Transition Year Programme offers students a variety of subjects and educational experiences designed to help our students to make the transition from the highly structured environment of the Junior Cycle to one where they will take greater responsibility for their own learning and decision making at Senior Cycle, and beyond.

Our aims for the Transition Year Programme are:

- To create opportunities for students to develop and mature in relation to their wellbeing, their sense of self, their role within the school community and their participation in broader society.
- To encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and to discover more about their personal strengths.
- To encourage students to develop their self-confidence and independence.
- To create learning opportunities for students that extend beyond the traditional classroom.
- To enable students to enhance their time management and organisational skills.
- To help students to learn social awareness and hone social competencies from participation in the programme and arising practical experiences.
- To develop students' sense of social responsibility.
- To help students make informed decisions about future education and careers.
- To provide students with a range of interdisciplinary general, technical and academic skills for study and for life.

Part 2: Programme Design

The TYP is designed based on four layers (diagram on next page):

✓ **Core layer**

Core subjects are studied all year and are JC and LC subjects – eg: Maths

✓ **Subject sampling**

These are optional subjects which will be on offer at LC and are tailored for TY – eg:
Home Economics

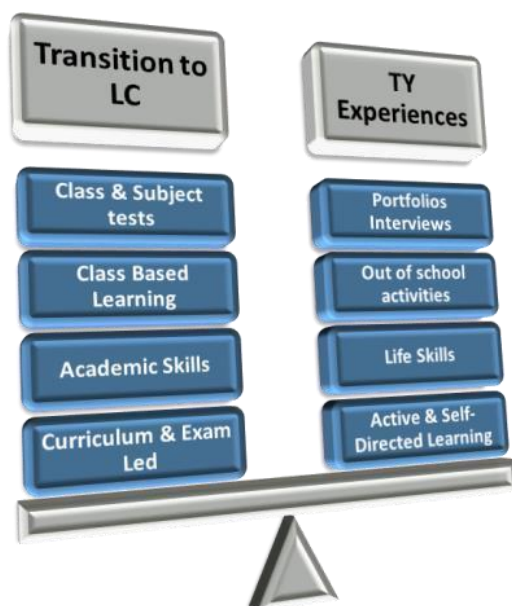
✓ **TY specific**

These subjects are specific to TY – eg: Forensics.

✓ **Calendar**

The calendar layer consists of highlights/activities/events specific to TY.

It is envisaged that the balance of these layers within the curriculum will reflect the need to maximise students' TY experiences while also paving the way forwards as part of their transition in to Senior Cycle.



1. TY Team

- ⊙ Co-ordinator: Sinéad Phillips
- ⊙ School Management: Marguerite Gorby, Aoife Ronan, Stephen Rhatigan
- ⊙ Year Head
- ⊙ Form Teachers
- ⊙ Career Guidance department
- ⊙ Parents, students, school community

2. Class groupings

Form classes continue on from Junior Cycle. This supports the House System and allows this pastoral care structure to permeate TY and carry on in to Senior Cycle. Students remain in these groupings for some subjects and are mixed for other subjects. This encourages students to get to know more people in their year group.

3. Assessment: December/May reports

- **Subject specific assessment tools** vary considerably from project work to portfolio assessment, presentations to website design, peer teaching to reflective journals, written, oral and aural exams.
- **Exams** take place in class time and as part of the in-house exam system (December/May). December and May exams will take place in 7 main subjects.
- **Portfolio:** Each student uses a portfolio in order to compile evidence of learning and experiences throughout the year. Some subjects use this platform as part of their assessment procedure. Within the portfolio, students complete 5 end-of-term reflections, which their form teacher evaluates for end-of-year credits.
- **TY Interviews** offer students a formal opportunity to showcase their learning experiences and to articulate their reflections on the year so far at their mid-year interview and for the year as a whole on their end of year interview.

- **Credit system for Certification**

Credits are awarded for student **effort and participation** in different areas of Transition Year.
A maximum of 300 credits is available.

Certificates require the following accumulation of credits:

260 - 300:	A Certificate with Distinction
220 – 259:	A Certificate with Merit
180 – 219:	A Certificate with Credit

Credits are accumulated as follows:

Subjects: 100 credits:

Teachers award pupils marks out of 100 for effort in each subject. An average mark is calculated and awarded as credits.

Attendance: 50 credits:

Up to 5 days absence throughout the year will not be penalised. After this, 2 credits per absence will be deducted. Certified medical absence will not be penalised.

Work Experience: 40 credits:

Submitting paperwork by required deadlines and securing placements (30 credits). The remaining 10 will be calculated based on portfolio evaluations of placements.

Portfolio/interview: 40 credits:

Students will be marked on their portfolio and a short interview. These elements require students to reflect on their TY experiences.

Conduct & Punctuality: 20 credits:

Lunchtime ‘late’ detentions merit a 5 credit deduction. Other detentions incur a 10 credit deduction.

Initiative: 50 credits:

Pupils are awarded 10 credits for involvement in each extra-curricular activity, up to a maximum of 50 credits.

4. TY Induction

TY students attend school for a few hours on a day before their classes commence for the year for a specific TY Induction. The TY Co-ordinator, Year Head and form teachers are present.

The TY Co-ordinator leads a session based on the TY philosophy and what the year is all about. This emphasises the importance of getting involved, being open-minded, taking increased responsibility for self and testing out and discovering personal strengths.

The Work Experience Co-ordinator presents a Work Experience Preparation Workshop.

Students are given an information pack, which the TY Co-ordinator leads them through, covering:

- The TY team – who's who
- Communication channels
- TY timetable
- The TY calendar & key dates
- Assessment & Credits
- Portfolios
- The TY Journal
- Gaisce

Note: Students are strongly encouraged to pursue the Bronze Gaisce Award. See www.gaisce.ie for further information.

5. TY Programme Evaluation

Students, staff and parents complete annual programme evaluations which identify strengths and needs of the programme in order to inform planning for the future.

6. TY Certification and Showcase Night

At the end of the year, a TY Showcase night is held in school to showcase to parents, students and staff the variety of work that has been undertaken and to celebrate students' achievements. Students are awarded their TY Certificate at this event, as well as any other certs they may have attained throughout the year (e.g. first aid, public speaking, etc.). Students who have completed their Gaisce Bronze Award are presented with their medals at the ceremony.

7. Trips

Each year a trip to an outdoor pursuits centre is undertaken in late September. All students are encouraged to attend and parents are notified in May of the previous year allowing financial planning to be put in place. This trip is a TY trip that serves to open the year on a note commensurate with the philosophy of TY – one of personal challenge and group cohesion. This trip has well and truly become a highlight of the TY calendar and is conducive to setting a tone of adventure, comradery and positivity for the year.

Other trips may be offered during the year, for example, previous groups have travelled to Krakow, Beijing, Shanghai, Santiago de Compostela, and Bergamo. These trips are subject to change from year to year. Information on what will be on offer for any particular year will be communicated to parents before the end of 3rd Year along with projected costs.

8. Costs

TY related costs including stationery, Recreational Studies activities, workshops, etc. come to approximately €390, which will be included in the stationery fee request note that will be mailed to parents/guardians in June.

The other key expense for the year is the TY trip to Carlingford Adventure Centre, which costs approximately €215. We encourage all students to participate in this trip as it is an important opportunity for them to bond as a year group and to form new friendships and develop a better understanding of each other. Parents/Guardians will be asked for a deposit of €130 for the Carlingford trip before school ends this year in order to secure our booking.

Part 4: Work Experience

Work Experience is an integral part of the TY programme and helps to prepare students for the world of work. It encourages students to take initiative, build confidence, develop social skills and work as part of a team. It also allows them to broaden their interests, discover personal strengths and areas in which they can improve.

Work Experience takes place for 3 set weeks across the year and 1 set week of community care. The dates are:

- 19th – 23rd October 2021
- 1st – 5th February 2021
- 8th – 12th February 2021
- 26th – 30th April 2021

In order to support students and parents in their preparation for TY Work Experience, the following steps are taken:

3rd Year (March):

- The TY Co-ordinator and the Work Experience Co-ordinator speak to the parents of incoming TYs about Work Experience. Dates, formal procedures and the value of the placements are discussed.
- Students are given a similar talk about sourcing and applying for work experience for the following year. It is noted that for certain placements positions are limited so immediate application is essential. Work Experience application forms are distributed to the students. Garda Vetting requirements are explained.

TY Induction (August of TY):

- Work Experience Preparation Workshop with the Work Experience Co-ordinator.
Topics covered such as:
 1. Garda Vetting
 2. Problem scenarios on the first day of employment
 3. Expectations of employers
 4. Health and safety
 5. Appearance: Grooming/appropriate attire as directed by the school and place of employment

During TY:

Students work with the Work Experience Co-ordinator to ensure paperwork is up to date and they take responsibility for completing Work Experience reviews on their portfolio.

Part 5: Subjects

1. Option subjects

Option subjects are TY specialist subjects chosen towards the end of 3rd year. Student their two option subject for the whole academic year. They will choose one subject from ‘Art, Craft & Design’, ‘Musical Production’, Enterprise & Event Management Sports Leadership & Active Schools Flag. They will choose a second subject from Junk Kouture, Computer Applications (Web Design), Film Making, Journalism, Chinese Language & Culture. We strive to assign every student to their preferred subject, however due to class size this is not always possible. It is recommended your daughter considers her 2nd and 3rd choice carefully.

2. Block subjects

Block subjects are studied for a set amount of weeks and then rotated to the next block. Students have one choice block and the rest a mandatory.

Choice block: Students rate these subjects 1 – 5 and will have 3 subjects for 9 weeks each. We strive to assign every student to their preferred subject, however due to class size this is not always possible. It is recommended your daughter considers her subject choice carefully. CSI Forensic Science, Human Rights & Development Education, World Affairs, Home Economics, and Music.

Mandatory blocks:

Blocks 1: Accounting, Economics, and Business Studies. (9 weeks each)

Block 2: Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Computer Science. (5 weeks each)

Block 3: Geography and History. (Half year each)

Block 4: Careers and SPHE. (Half year each)

Block 5: Philosophy, Leadership, Drivers Ed, and Drama. (6 weeks each)

3. Core subjects

These subjects will be studied for the whole year, English, Irish, Maths, MFL, IT, Religion, Recreational Studies, and Work Experience Skills.